

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION



GREG GIANFORTE, GOVERNOR

1539 ELEVENTH AVENUE

STATE OF MONTANA

DIRECTOR'S OFFICE: (406) 444-2074
FAX: (406) 444-2684

PO BOX 201601
HELENA, MONTANA 59620-1601

Scoping Notice Optional Use of Legal Ads for Scoping Notices 5/20/2022

The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), Forest Management Bureau (FMB) is proposing to cease the required use of legal ads in newspapers as a method to disseminate scoping notices related to forest management activities, such as timber harvests.

In accordance with Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA), the DNRC ensures adequate and effective public participation for forest management activities, in terms of informing the public of proposed activities and soliciting a response from the public. The DNRC initially informs the public of proposed timber harvests through a scoping notice that is distributed in various ways, such as through email, letters, online website, and legal ads in newspapers. Although MEPA does not specify what methods should be used for scoping notice distribution, MEPA does indicate that the time and resources invested in public participation should be effective.

The DNRC is proposing to make the use of newspaper legal ads optional in communicating information related to forest management activities due to the costliness of posting legal ads and their ineffectiveness in administering public participation in most situations. The DNRC may look to other methods for the communication of forest management scoping notices, such as other online platforms, social media, etc.

The DNRC is in the scoping phase of this administrative action and invites written comments and suggestions concerning this proposal. Please respond by June 21st, 2022 to:

Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

Attn: **Emilia Grzesik**

Forest Management Bureau

2705 Spurgin Road, Missoula MT 59804

Emilia.grzesik@mt.gov

406-542-4314